

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-39 are subject to a restriction requirement in the outstanding Official Action. Claim 6 has been cancelled without prejudice and the subject matter thereof has been added to amended claims 1, 21, 27 and 35. Accordingly, claims 1-5 and 7-39 remain in the application.

The present application is a national phase entry (§371) of International Application PCT/GB03/05462 and therefore includes priority back through the International application to the filing date of the Great Britain priority document, i.e., December 18, 2002. The Examiner's confirmation of the priority claim and constructive receipt of the copies of the certified copies of the priority documents by checking boxes "12," "a" and "3" on the Office Action Summary Sheet in any response is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has restricted the originally filed claims to two groups, i.e., apparatus claim Group I with claims 1-26, 38 and 39 and method Group II with claims 27-37. Applicant has amended the claims by canceling claim 6 and adding the subject matter thereof to independent claims 1, 21, 27 and 35.

The subject matter of claim 6 is considered to be a common technical feature with respect to each of the independent claims which is not known in the art. The Examiner's citation of the Nardiello patent is very much appreciated, but the subject matter of former claim 6 clearly defines over that patent. As a result, each of independent claims 1, 21, 27 and 35 have the same special technical feature which is patentable over the cited Nardiello reference and therefore Applicant respectfully traverses any continued restriction requirement.

Pursuant to the Examiner's request, Applicant elects the invention of Group I, i.e., claims 1-5, 7-26, 38 and 39, but again notes that the restriction requirement has been traversed (due to

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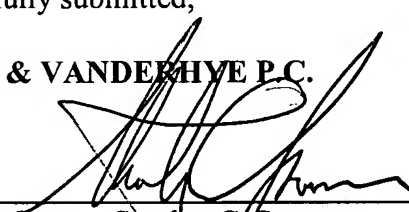
the existence in the currently amended claims of a common special technical feature which patentably defines over the Nardiello patent).

Having responded to all issues raised in the outstanding Restriction Requirement, it is submitted that remaining claims 1-5 and 7-39 are in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. In the event the Examiner is of the opinion that a brief telephone or personal interview will facilitate allowance of one or more of the above claims, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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